

REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

Claims 1, 3-10, 17, 19 and 23-27 remain in this application. In the instant correspondence, claims 1, 3-10, 17, 19 and 23-26 have been canceled without prejudice to prosecuting these same, or similar claims, in subsequently filed applications. Claim 27 is pending.

Claims 1, 3-10, 17, 19 and 23-26 were rejected. The Examiner made the following rejections:

- (1) Claims 1, 3-10, 17, 19 and 23-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112 (first paragraph).
- (2) Claim 26 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112 (second paragraph).

Applicants believe the amendments to the claims (set out above) and the remarks (set out below) traverse the Examiner's rejections.

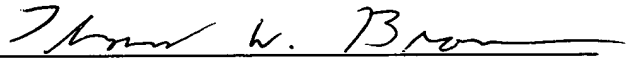
**1. The Pending Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 112
(First and Second Paragraph) Are Moot**

In order to advance their business interests and without acquiescing to the Examiner's arguments, while expressly reserving the right to prosecute the claims as originally filed (or claims similar thereto), the Applicants have cancelled claims 1, 3-10, 17, 19 and 23-26. These cancellations leave pending (independent) claim 27. In paragraph eight of the Office Action mailed December 15, 2003, the Examiner stated: "[c]laim 27 is allowed." Therefore given the (now) pending claim has already been designated, by the Examiner, as allowed; Applicants respectfully submit the *pending application* be allowed.

CONCLUSION

The Applicants believe the amendments and arguments, set forth in the instant correspondence, traverse the Examiner's rejections and, therefore, request that all grounds for rejection be withdrawn for the reasons set out above. Should the Examiner believe that a telephone interview would aid in the prosecution of this application, the Applicants encourage the Examiner to call the undersigned collect at 617.984.0616.

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